

is good for the environment is also good for the economy, and to making their communities better places in which to live, work, and do business.

When I traveled to North Carolina in July 1998 to designate 14 rivers across the country as American Heritage Rivers, I was optimistic about the prospects for restoring these waterways and reinvigorating the communities they help sustain. Since that time, this initiative has helped steer hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal assistance to these communities to revitalize riverfronts, restore precious habitat, preserve cultural and historic resources, save open space, create recreational opportunities, and spur economic growth.

At the same time, this initiative has helped forge new partnerships between citizens, businesses, grassroots organizations, and local, State, and Federal agencies. And it has helped demonstrate how the Federal Government can work as a good neighbor in support of local communities, helping them realize their own visions for their rivers and their future.

I want to thank the many Members of Congress who supported this initiative, including the late Senator John Chafee; his son, Senator Lincoln Chafee; Senators Mary Landrieu, Carl Levin, and John Kerry; and Representatives Paul Kanjorski, Sue Kelly, Corrine Brown and William Jefferson. Three years after I announced it, the American Heritage Rivers initiative is a strong community-driven effort with broad and increasingly bipartisan support.

I urge Congress and the incoming administration to build upon the great strides made in just the last few years by acting on several recommendations contained in this report. Building on this record of progress will enable communities across the country to continue their efforts to bring new vitality to rivers that are truly the lifeblood of our Nation.

Statement Announcing the Chief of Staff of the Post-Presidency Transition Office

January 19, 2001

I am pleased to announce that Karen Tramontano will be serving as my Chief of Staff in my Post-Presidency Transition Office. Following that, Karen will direct my staff, work with me to develop a foundation, and manage my other public service activities. She will also serve an integral role in the development of my Presidential Library.

Karen Tramontano has spent the past two decades bringing more opportunity to working Americans. From her work at the Service Employees International Union to her days on the U.S. Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, Karen brought issues such as minimum wage, health and child care, and workers' and civil rights to the political forefront. She continued that effort at the White House, first as Counsel to my then Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles and then as Counselor to my Chief of Staff John Podesta. In that capacity, she also worked tirelessly on the census, global trade, and issues important to the Washington, DC, community. I know that in this new role she will continue to fight for these and other important causes.

Time and again, Karen has demonstrated keen insight and shrewd political judgment. Her energy is infectious, her skill and leadership unparalleled. I know she will bring that same level of commitment and enthusiasm to her work with me in the years ahead. I am grateful that she has agreed to take on one more assignment.

Open Letter to the People of Israel

January 19, 2001

Open Letter to the People of Israel:

On Saturday, January 20th, at the stroke of noon, I will step down as President of the United States. This will bring to a close eight eventful years during which I have dealt with